

REMARKS

With this amendment, Applicants cancel claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10 and 13 without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants reserve the right to file a continuing application directed to the subject matter in claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10 and 13.

Claims 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12 and 14 are all the claims pending in the application.

I. Claim Rejections

- 1) The Examiner has rejected claims 1 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Niikawa *et al.* (US 6,834,130) [“Niikawa”].
- 2) The Examiner has rejected claims 2 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Niikawa in view of Sugitani (JP 2001-045426) [“Sugitani”].
- 3) The Examiner has rejected claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Niikawa in view of Pfeiffer *et al.* (US 5,146,592) [“Pfeiffer”].
- 4) The Examiner has rejected claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Niikawa in view of Pfeiffer and Sugitani.
- 5) The Examiner has rejected claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Niikawa in view of Pfeiffer and Hicks (US Patent Application 2002/0063901) [“Hicks”].

Applicants have canceled claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10 and 13 without prejudice or disclaimer.

III. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for finding allowable subject matter in claims 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12 and 14 and for indicating that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicants have rewritten claims 3, 7, 11 and 14 in independent form. Applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance.

In the Reasons for Allowance, the Examiner combines language found in claims 3 and 14. Therefore, Applicants submit that each claim is patentable based on its own language and not based on any paraphrasing or addition of language that may have been made by the Examiner.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

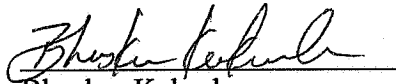
Respectfully submitted,

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

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CUSTOMER NUMBER


Bhaskar Kakarla
Registration No. 54,627

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